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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8174
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
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RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 0425
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0487
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 2030
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0834
RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE 0069
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 0022
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHDS/USMISSION USAU ADDIS ABABA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 000170

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [USAU](#) [LY](#) [MR](#)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT ABDALLAHI MAY GO TO LIBYA

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Dennis Hankins for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

¶1. (C) President Abdallahi's Chief of Staff, Ahmed Kaber Ould Hammoudi, told Charge March 2 that President Abdallahi had accepted in principle a request from Muammar Qadhafi to meet with him in Libya on Friday, March 6. Hammoudi said the President had accepted the request from the Libyan Special Envoy for Mauritania on three conditions; (a) he won't travel until the 5-man FNDD delegation currently in Tripoli returns and briefs him, (b) he expects to arrive in Nouakchott under the same conditions as previously attempted (i.e. with a motorcade of his delegation) and will return to Lemden if impeded by the regime, (c) he will meet with and brief Qadhafi on his proposition for a solution to the crisis but is not prepared "to negotiate away the constitution." The Libyans are to send a plane for President Abdallahi and his delegation Thursday evening with the President leaving Lemden early in the morning on Friday. Hammoudi said he did not know how long the President would be in Libya but indicated the President planned to return after the meeting with no side trips.

¶2. (C) Hammoudi said that none of the Libyan contacts have yet proposed anything to the President. The FNDD delegation already in Libya is expected to start meetings the evening of the 2nd. Hammoudi told Charge, "we have little expectation of anything useful coming from Qadhafi" but suggested the President was obliged to hear him out because the February 20 International Consultative Group on Mauritania had blessed a Libyan effort as the presidency of the African Union and because "it's Qadhafi." Hammoudi added the President will work with Qadhafi as long as the Guide sticks to the positions laid out by the African Union and doesn't run his own bilateral initiative. He noted, "Amongst us Arabs, there is not a deep respect for questions of legitimacy and democracy," meaning that Abdallahi needs to deal with Qadhafi the African, not Qadhafi the Arab.

¶3. (C) Hammoudi took the opportunity to again thank the U.S. for its constant and solid support for Mauritanian democracy and particularly for the February 23 U.S. press statement in support of the President's political plan.

¶4. (C) Hammoudi noted the President had forwarded letters to the United Nations seeking to place Sidi Mohamed Ould Amajar aiming to name Amajar as the Mauritanian PermRep to the UN -- hoping to repeat the very fruitful experience they had in naming their own representative to the AU. He thanked the

U.S. for the technical advice needed in framing the letter and also noted he understood the African Union would soon be briefing the Security Council on Mauritania soon. He hoped the U.S. would continue to support Mauritania within the U.N.

Charge noted that the U.N. system was a particularly complicated beast and that the naming of his envoy to replace the existing Mauritanian PermRep would be tricky at best. Given the politics of the U.N., Charge stressed that any initiative be clearly seen as an African -- not American -- initiative but that the U.S. would lend its support once the Africans put something on the table (presuming it meets what Abdallahi wants).

15. (U) Tripoli Minimize Considered.
HANKINS